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Místní agenda 21

CENIA, česká informační agentura životního prostředí
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KEY MESSAGES

Local Agenda 21 (LA21) involves applying sustainable development principles at the local and regional levels.

The objective of Local Agenda 21 is to increase the standard of living. Basic principles are quality public administration, continuous communication with the public and strategic planning and management.

Agenda 21 was adopted at the international level in 1992. Since then, thousands of local authorities, in addition to citizens, NGOs, entrepreneurs and other groups have initiated local Agendas 21.

LA21 began in the Czech Republic in the 1990s as a pilot project. Currently, several dozen municipalities are engaged in LA21 activities.

A set of LA21 criteria was developed to evaluate LA21 processes under the auspices of the Government Council for Sustainable Development. The list of municipalities, towns and regions that follow LA21 criteria can be found in the publicly accessible LA21 Database. LA21 criteria also include sustainable development indicators.

REFERENCES AND OTHER INFORMATION

Institutions and organisations

- Government Council for Sustainable Development, Ministry of the Environment (MoE) – <http://www.mzp.cz>
- CENIA, the Czech Environmental Information Agency – <http://www.cenia.cz>, <http://www.ma21.cz>
- National Network of Healthy Towns of the Czech Republic – <http://www.nszm.cz>, <http://www.dobrapraxe.cz>

Other useful links

- The LA21 information portal – <http://www.ma21.cz>, <http://www.mzp.cz/udrzitelny-rozvoj>
- Financial support – grants for LA21 – http://www.mzp.cz/cz/revolvingovy_fond_mzp
- The Official register of LA21 in the Czech Republic – <http://ma21.cenia.cz>
- Sustainable Development – a wealth of Internet information <http://www.udrzitelny-rozvoj.cz>
- Ministry of the Environment (a team of authors): Local Agenda 21 – Information, Procedures, Criteria, Praha, 2006 – <http://www.ma21.cz>



Local Agenda 21



THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC



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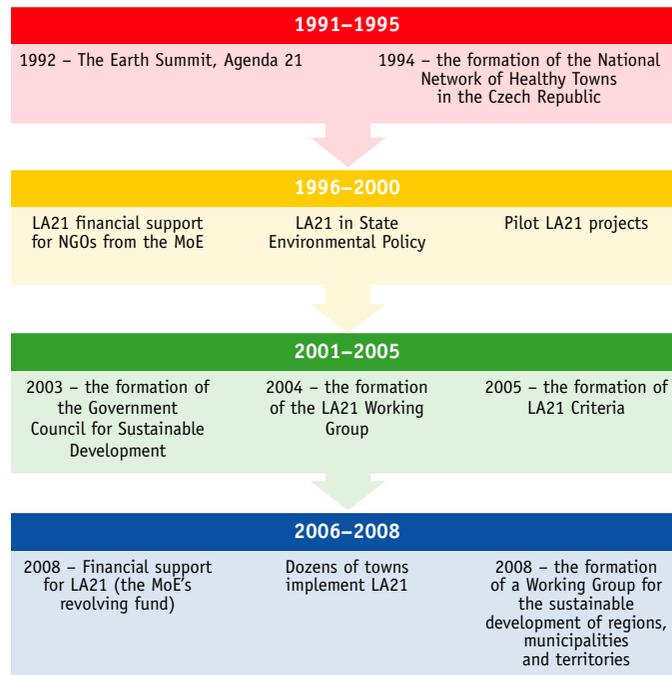


THE FORMATION OF LA21

The former Czechoslovakia (and later Czech Republic) supported the sustainable development principles formulated in Agenda 21 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The term Local Agenda 21 (LA21) is derived from the document entitled "Local Authorities' Initiatives in Support of Agenda 21".

THE APPLICATION OF LA21 IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

☉ The main milestones on the way to Local Agenda 21 in the Czech Republic, 1991–2008



The number of municipalities, towns and regions that want to incorporate sustainable development principles and LA21 into their policies has been growing. While during the second half of the 1990s they were individual pilot projects, today dozens of locations around the Czech Republic are concerned.

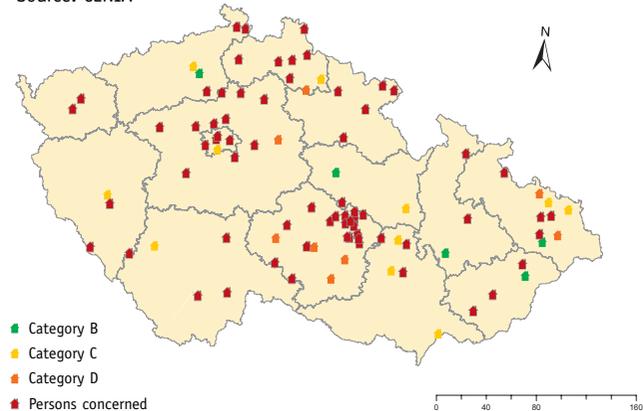
THE ACTUAL LEVEL OF LOCAL AGENDA 21 IS MEASURED BY LA21 CRITERIA

In order to compare the quality of local Agendas 21 and to evaluate and certify them, the Government Council for Sustainable Development approved an official set of LA21 Criteria in 2005. These criteria were developed by the Working Group for LA21. These criteria help municipalities assess their actual level of LA21. For municipalities, regions and micro-regions they represent the framework of several dozens of standardised indicators that represent the high quality of processes occurring in a municipality. The criteria include: the organisational aspect of the LA21 process and the relationship between the public administration bodies and the non-profit and entrepreneurial sectors involved in active public engagement,

political support and systems management of the municipality based on sustainable development principles. An overview of towns and municipalities that follow these criteria or plan to do so is provided in the LA21 Database, administered by CENIA (<http://ma21.cenia.cz>).

☉ Municipalities involved in Local Agenda 21 in the Czech Republic, October 2008

Source: CENIA



THE DATABASE OF LOCAL AGENDAS 21

The centralised public database of local Agendas 21 (<http://ma21.cenia.cz>) includes a summary of entities implementing LA21 in the Czech Republic and the actual level of LA21 processes. It can be used as a portal for the exchange of information between municipalities, regions and micro-regions. It is a good source of inspiration for politicians, LA21 coordinators in relevant authorities and citizens. It also inspires cooperation, the exchange of valuable experiences and moderate competitiveness between municipalities. These are the most effective methods for the overall quality improvement of the public administration bodies.

FINANCE FOR LA21

Since the second half of the 1990s, the Ministry of the Environment (MoE) has supported the work of NGOs that work with certain authorities in order to initiate LA21 process in a given location. In 2007, 27 municipalities were awarded a one-off subsidy for their LA21 activities. Since 2008, direct special-purpose support for LA21 processes has been in place, meant mainly for municipalities (villages, towns, micro-regions and regions) and other cooperating bodies (NGOs, etc.). The first two calls within this fund were announced in 2008, with a third one in 2009. The total amount allocated to support the implementation and development of LA21 from the MoE's Revolving Fund is CZK 45 million. A number of specific activities aimed at sustainable development at the local level can also be effectively financed from other EU sources (e.g. the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund).

METHODOLOGICAL GUIDANCE

It is also the mission of the Czech National Network of Healthy Towns' website to inform the citizens about proven innovative procedures

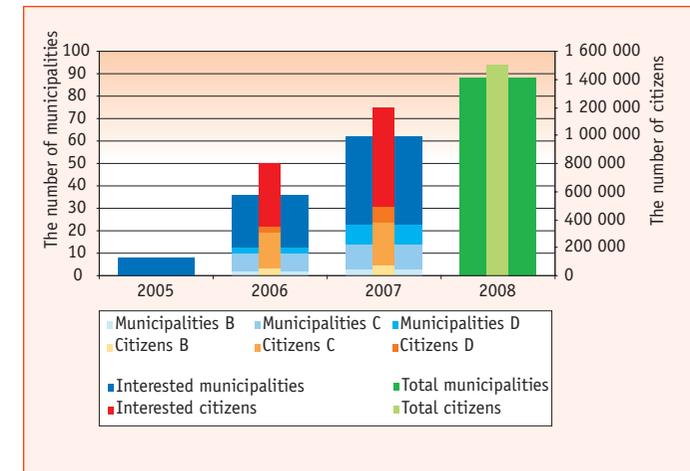
(<http://www.dobrapraxe.cz>). The Network also provides comprehensive consulting services to municipalities and regions that are members. The municipalities are also methodologically guided by a number of other NGOs, such as the TIMUR Association (the Team Initiative for Local Sustainable Development), dealing mainly with the correct application of renowned "European" ECI indicators. International experience can be gained from the ICLEI or ANPED members.

LA21 AS A QUALITY MEASURE

In 2006, the Ministry of the Interior adopted Local Agenda 21 as an official method of quality public administration together with the Common Assessment Framework, the Balanced Scorecard and the Benchmarking methods. Towns, municipalities and regions implementing LA21 were given the opportunity to win a prize awarded by the Ministry of the Interior for quality public administration.

☉ The number of municipalities and citizens involved in local Agenda 21 in the Czech Republic, 2005–2008

Source: CENIA



LOCAL AGENDA IN PRACTICE

Local Agenda 21 represents a method of quality public administration management based on the introduction of sustainable development principles into the everyday practices of local authorities. These mainly include involving the public in decision-making processes and community planning and respecting the requirements of all three sustainable development pillars by elected representatives so that the citizens feel increasingly better and more at home at their place of residence.

FUTURE

The Czech Republic has set out on the path to incorporate LA21 into a common public administration standard so that Czech towns, municipalities and regions can compare the quality of their development to foreign countries. The success of this process is subject to cooperation and extensive partnership with key political representatives and employees of public authorities, as well as representatives from NGOs, schools, entrepreneurs and the general public.